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## Cuba Background

# Senators Want to Ride Herd on Secret Agency

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WASHINGTON — Echoes of last spring's disastrous invasion of Cuba will soon be heard on Capitol Hill. Because the Central Intelligence Agency pulled the strings in that attempt to topple Castro's dictatorship, and because the attempt failed, new life has been injected into an old proposal to subject this super-secret arm of the federal government to a degree of congressional supervision.

The Senate foreign relations committee is going to put down for public hearing a resolution sponsored by Sen. Eugene J. McCarthy, D-Minn., and co-sponsored by 18 other Democratic senators and three Republican senators. The resolution, introduced shortly after the anti-Castro forces met disaster at the Bay of Pigs last April, would establish a joint congressional committee to exercise "some kind of continuing supervision over foreign policy activities and foreign intelligence . . . programs."

A similar proposal was rejected by the Senate in 1956. Senator Carl Hayden declared then that "Congress has no right . . . to regulate an agency . . . designed solely to provide the President with information to enable him to make decisions." Considerable concern was expressed also lest establishment of such a committee lead to disclosure by members of the committee of information that should be held secret. Yet the joint committee on atomic energy, on which the proposed new joint committee would be patterned, has functioned satisfactorily in another highly sensitive field.

Dissatisfaction with the CIA's performance in the Cuban affair, and growing uneasiness over the agency's participation in undercover operations of that character, may win the present proposal for congressional oversight of foreign intelligence activities a more sympathetic hearing than it received in 1956. Everyone recognizes that effective intelligence-gathering activities are vital to the security of the United States. But whether an intelligence agency should engage also in free-wheeling paramilitary operations that may, if unsuccessful, gravely compromise the country's interests and prestige now seems debatable.

It is understood that, following the Cuban invasion, both the President's foreign intelligence advisory board and a special board of inquiry headed by General Maxwell D. Taylor recommended that conduct of paramilitary operations be turned over to the Defense De-

partment. While President Kennedy is believed to have placed some curbs on CIA, he is not known to have stripped it of responsibility for undercover operations unrelated to intelligence gathering. Reorganization of the agency is now proceeding under leadership of its new director, former Atomic Energy Commission Chairman John A. McCone, who took over from Allen W. Dulles on Nov. 29.

Nearly a score of federal departments and agencies, in addition to CIA have intelligence units of their own or participate in analysis and evaluation of material of interest in particular fields. The Central Intelligence Agency, created by the National Security Act of 1947, is directly responsible to the National Security Council and evaluates on an overall basis the information gathered by its own agents and by other intelligence units.

The focal point of American intelligence naturally is the Soviet Union and things Soviet, and there have been formidable obstacles to surmount. Lack of qualified language and area specialists and the Kremlin's habits of extreme secrecy have made it difficult both to obtain information and to evaluate it adequately.